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**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA
FRESNO DIVISION**

Serena Leeann Murphy,

Plaintiff,

v.

Frank J. Bisignano¹,
COMMISSIONER OF SOCIAL
SECURITY,

Defendant.

Case No. 1:24-cv-01159-KES-GSA

**STIPULATION FOR THE AWARD
AND PAYMENT OF ATTORNEY
FEES AND EXPENSES PURSUANT
TO THE EQUAL ACCESS TO
JUSTICE ACT; ORDER**

IT IS HEREBY STIPULATED by and between the parties through their undersigned counsel, subject to the approval of the Court, that Plaintiff be awarded attorney fees and expenses in the amount of SIX THOUSAND AND 00/100 (\$6,000.00) under the Equal Access to Justice Act (EAJA), 28 U.S.C. § 2412(d), and costs in the amount of ZERO dollars (\$0.00) under 28 U.S.C. §1920. This amount

¹ Frank J. Bisignano became the Commissioner of Social Security on May 7, 2025. Pursuant to Rule 25(d) of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, Frank J. Bisignano should be substituted for Leland Dudek as the defendant in this suit. No further action need be taken to continue this suit by reason of the last sentence of section 205(g) of the Social Security Act, 42 U.S.C. § 405(g).

1 represents compensation for all legal services rendered on behalf of Plaintiff by counsel
2 in connection with this civil action, in accordance with 28 U.S.C. §§ 1920, 2412(d).

3 Plaintiff was the prevailing party in this matter and Plaintiff is an individual
4 whose net worth does not exceed \$2,000,000 at the time the civil action was filed.

5 After the Court issues an order for EAJA fees to Plaintiff, the government will
6 consider the matter of Plaintiff's assignment of EAJA fees to Plaintiff's attorney.
7 Under *Astrue v. Ratliff*, 130 S. Ct. 2521, 2528-29 (2010), EAJA fees awarded by this
8 Court belong to the Plaintiff and are subject to offset under the Treasury Offset Program
9 (31 U.S.C. § 3716(c)(3)(B) (2006)). Any EAJA fees should therefore be awarded to
10 Plaintiff and not to Plaintiff's attorney. If, after receiving the Court's EAJA fee order,
11 the Commissioner (1) determines that Plaintiff has assigned his right to EAJA fees to
12 his attorney; (2) determines that Plaintiff does not owe a debt that is subject to offset
13 under the Treasury Offset Program, and (3) agrees to waive the requirements of the
14 Anti-Assignment Act, then the EAJA fees will be made payable to Plaintiff's attorney,
15 JONATHAN O. PEÑA-MANCINAS at the firm, PEÑA & BROMBERG, PC.
16 However, if there is a debt owed under the Treasury Offset Program, the Commissioner
17 cannot agree to waive the requirements of the Anti-Assignment Act, and the remaining
18 EAJA fees after offset will be paid by a check or electronic fund transfer (EFT) made
19 out to Plaintiff, but delivered to Plaintiff's attorney, JONATHAN O. PEÑA-
20 MANCINAS at the firm, PEÑA & BROMBERG, PC.
21

22 This stipulation constitutes a compromise settlement of Plaintiff's request for
23 EAJA attorney fees, and does not constitute an admission of liability on the part of
24 Defendant under the EAJA or otherwise. Payment of the agreed amount shall constitute
25 a complete release from, and bar to, any and all claims that Plaintiff and/or Counsel
26 including Counsel's firm may have relating to EAJA attorney fees in connection with
27 this action.
28

1 The parties further agree that the EAJA award is without prejudice to the right of
2 Plaintiff's attorney to seek attorney fees pursuant to Social Security Act § 206(b), 42
3 U.S.C. § 406(b), subject to the offset provisions of the EAJA. *See* 28 U.S.C. §
4 2412(c)(1) (2006).

5 Respectfully submitted,

6
7 Dated: December 29, 2025

8 /s/ Jonathan O. Peña
9 JONATHAN O. PEÑA
Attorney for Plaintiff

10 Dated: December 29, 2025

11 ERIC GRANT
12 United States Attorney
13 MATHEW W. PILE
14 Head of Program Litigation 1
Law & Policy
Social Security Administration

15 By: * Noah Schabacker
16 Noah Schabacker
17 Special Assistant U.S. Attorney
18 Attorneys for Defendant
19 (*Permission to use electronic signature
20 obtained via email on December 29, 2025).
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ORDER

Based upon the parties' Stipulation for the Award and Payment of Equal Access to Justice Act Fees and Expenses (the "Stipulation"),

IT IS ORDERED that fees and expenses in the amount of SIX THOUSAND AND 00/100 (\$6,000.00) as authorized by the Equal Access to Justice Act (EAJA), 28 U.S.C. § 2412(d), be awarded subject to the terms of the Stipulation.

IT IS SO ORDERED.

Dated: December 29, 2025



UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE